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CIA/SAVA / WIND 700214



WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 14 February 1970

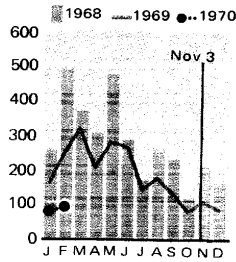
NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

For the President Only

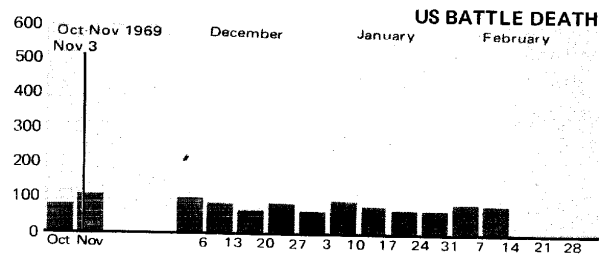
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SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

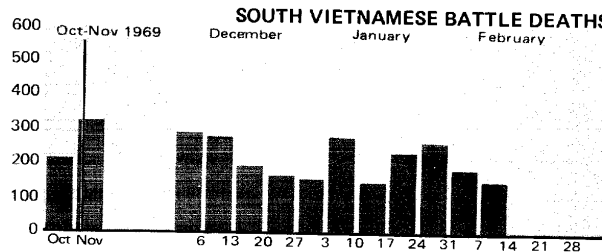
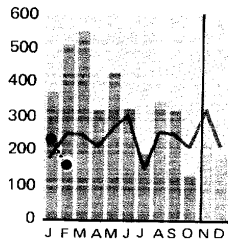
1968-1970

weekly average
for each month

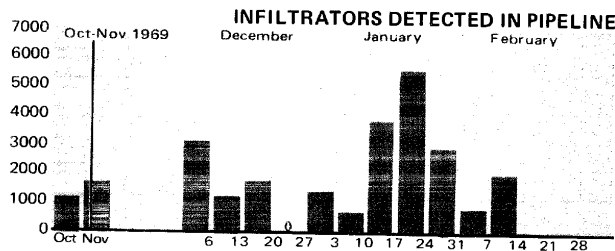
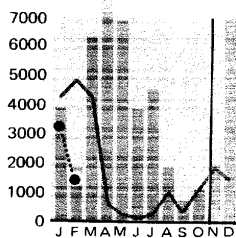
OCTOBER 1969 - FEBRUARY 1970

weekly data as reported, Dec-Jan-Feb
weekly average per month, Oct-Nov

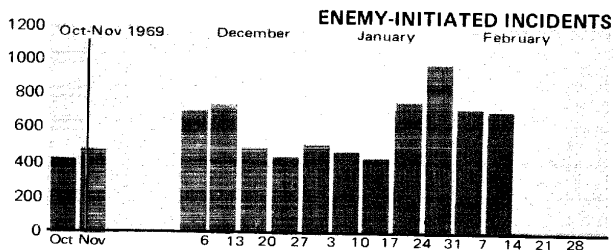
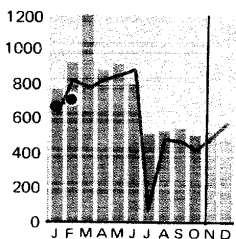
US BATTLE DEATHS declined slightly this week to 92 from last week's 95.



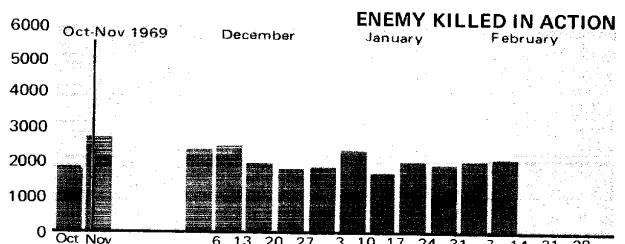
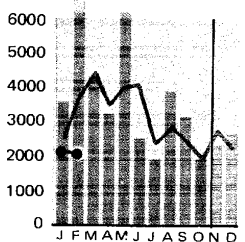
SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS decreased to 157 from last week's 176. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.



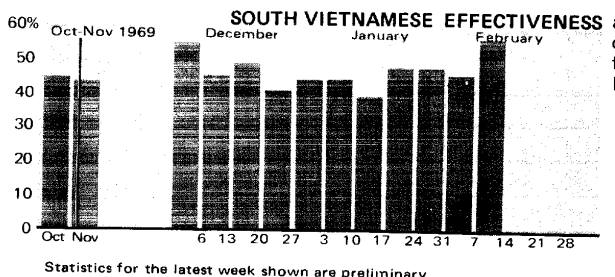
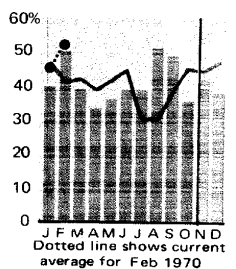
INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE stand at two battalion-size groups totalling 1,250 personnel, a "gap" group of 570, two "QL" groups, and one other four-digit group. Pipeline inputs since 23 October 1969 now total 35,000-36,000.



ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS decreased to 716 from last week's 726.



ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION rose to 2,167 from the 2,105 of the previous week.



SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by RVN forces increased to 57% from last week's 46%.

Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

Enemy-initiated activity during the past week remained at the relatively low level which has prevailed since the Tet ceasefire. Several sharp clashes have occurred in various parts of the country, notably I and IV Corps, but these appear to have been occasioned by allied initiative. Overall, the anticipated post-Tet surge of enemy activity did not materialize. This may reflect a conscious tactical decision but allied operational activity probably contributed to pre-empting any plans along these lines the Communist may have had.

In the IV Corps province of Kien Tuong, for the past week ARVN forces have been in almost daily contact with the North Vietnamese Army's 88th Regiment, believed to be attempting to move from Cambodia into base area 470 preparatory to striking at My Tho City. More than 200 casualties have been inflicted on the enemy and his timetable for future operational activity in the northern Delta region has probably been upset.

While all sources continue to reflect enemy preparations for future attacks, there is little to suggest that a coordinated country-wide offensive is imminent or planned for the near future. Attacks that do develop are likely to consist of localized "high points" directed against allied outposts, GVN administrative centers, and the pacification program.

Enemy Infiltration

There was a slight upswing in infiltration activity during the week with two battalion-size groups detected as well as two [REDACTED] groups. 25X1B In addition, a "gap" group and a small sized four digit group were accepted, bringing the week's total to over 2,000 personnel. The large groups were both observed in NVN, the first groups noted there since 25 January. The total infiltration estimate since 23 October 1969 now stands at 35,000-36,000 personnel in 75 groups. Forty-four of the groups were detected in NVN, 23 in Laos, and eight are "gap fills."

South Vietnam Developments

Prospects for passage of the original Land Reform Bill in the GVN Senate, once considered very favorable, have diminished in recent weeks. The long delay in bringing the bill to a vote, due in part to the controversy over austerity taxes and the Chau case, has enabled opponents of the reform to mobilize and has resulted in wavering on the part of some independent and pro-Thieu deputies. Others, including segments of Senator Don's opposition bloc, are expected to oppose the bill simply to express their opposition to Thieu. Although there may still be sufficient support in the Senate to pass the bill, there is an increased danger that the liberal features of the original program might be emasculated. The present upper house version of the bill provides for the elimination of absentee landlordism with the land going to the present cultivator without cost. Such a bill would go a long way in winning support for the government among the rural population, or at least of removing the fear among the peasants that the return of the government's authority will mean the loss of their land. It would also improve Thieu's image abroad as a social reformer.

The commanders of the ARVN 18th and 25th Divisions, who have responsibility for the III Corps provinces west and north of Saigon, have expressed confidence in their troops' ability to go it alone following the departure of U.S. combat forces. General Thinh, Commander of the 25th Division, believes his division has improved significantly in terms of leadership and tactics over the past several years and is capable of containing (but not decisively defeating) the enemy provided the U.S. continues to provide the present level of combat and logistical support. Both General Thinh and General Tho, Commander of the 18th Division, think the Regional and Popular Forces are presently capable of carrying out their mission of providing territorial security to the pacified area, but recognize that lack of experience and leadership leaves their performance uncertain in the event of a showdown with main force enemy troops.

As a result of combined operations with ARVN and U.S. forces, however, the RF/PF forces are overcoming their deficiencies. The confidence of these senior officers in Vietnamization is tempered by the absence thus far of a serious challenge to the program in III Corps and by the fact that the favorable security situation and progress in pacification can be attributed in part to the lack of enemy activity.

Communist Developments

North Vietnam's Communist Party newspaper, Nhan Dan, is giving extensive publicity to a new and lengthy article by Party First Secretary Le Duan. While the details are not yet available, it is being referred to as a "very important and very basic document." Among other things, it appears to be a further effort to highlight Le Duan's leadership role in the party after his near-obscure of recent months. The available text does not suggest any major policy shifts for Le Duan sounds the same themes of protracted war on a "step-by-step" basis as previously expressed by Truong Chinh and General Giap. He also expresses criticism of those who stray from the "correct revolutionary methods" -- a possible reference to his own earlier advocacy of escalation. Le Duan breaks no new ground in discussing the lack of responsiveness of the population to regime policy, security problems, the need for increased socialization, poor party leadership and the Sino-Soviet dispute, but he seems to give higher priority to heavy industry than other regime spokesmen. The full text, when available, may provide a better insight into Le Duan's views on conduct of the war in the South which are referred to in the summary, but not discussed.

Other Major Developments

In Laos, strong North Vietnamese Army elements are now well into an offensive that has as its immediate objective the clearing of the Plaine des Jarres of Royal Lao Government (RLG) presence. The Meo guerrilla formations of General Vang Pao are currently bearing the brunt of this drive, but they have been forced into defensive positions on the Plaine and are weary after several months of sustained combat. In addition to clearing the Plaine, Hanoi may intend to try to erase the Meo guerrillas as an effective fighting force by striking for their bases at Long Tieng and Sam Thong. The size and intensity of the current Communist effort also suggests larger political objectives. Hanoi may hope to mount enough pressure to collapse the RLG or, at least, make Souvanna and the King receptive to some sort of a deal in which the price for an easing of North Vietnamese pressure would be a new RLG posture vis-a-vis the U.S., e.g., a Laotian call for an end to all U.S. involvement in Laos, including an end to the bombing of the Communists' essential infiltration corridor in the southern Panhandle.

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